Surára
Pakidái

/72 cont./

•766 The ceremony for an old person is entirely different. After death has set in, his head is chopped off and is hung, likewise in a little wooden rack, in the crown of a tree, again 15 or 20 minutes away from the maloka. The body, however, is buried in the ground in the jungle without ceremony, and, to be sure, in a squatting position, bound tightly with lianas. This is supposed to prevent its possible return, for it would have dire consequences for the tribe. The head, however, is burned on a small pyre, under [775] the same circumstances as described above, so that the soul may reach the moon in the ascending smoke; the remaining bone ashes are also kept.

769 888 266 The reason for the different obsequies for younger and older persons is the following: At the big annual ceremony in memory of the dead, which is held jointly with the Surára (see pp. 222 ff.), all the men drink the bone ashes of their deceased relatives, mixed with banana soup, because they believe that in this way the vigor and spirit of the dead remain within the tribes. In the case of old people, however, it is assumed that their bodies are already too leached out for their ashes to be able to transmit strength any more. Only the bone ashes of the head are still regarded as valuable.

888 If members of the tribe are very old or so seriously ill that, in spite of all efforts to cure them, they are no longer able to take part in the joint migrations, they are killed. For this purpose there takes place beforehand a gathering of the chief and older, more experienced men, at which they choose a participant who has to perform the killing. He uses a stick for this and, while the person in question is asleep, beats him hard on the head several times, until he has breathed his last (333). These tribal

[771]

333. Old and sick people are killed in similar manner among the Ipurina. "Moribund persons," writes Ehrenreich, "are said to be dispatched to the other world not infrequently by sorcerers by means of club-blows" (Ehrenreich, 1891,

Surára
Pakidái

/72 cont./

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[191]

333. (cont.)
p. 70). Among the Piaroa Indians very weak old people are walled up alive in a cave. They are given food and drink for several more days and, when this has been used up, die of enervation (Marquis de Wavrin, 1944, pp. 197/98).

members destined for death are thus dispatched into the other world in an altogether humane manner, and even the killing itself is dictated by humane impulses. Since these old and sick persons can, of course, no longer take part in the customary seminomadic way of life, they would be obliged to remain helplessly behind when the tribe sets out on a new migration. This is to be prevented, however, /73/ and at the same time it is desired that the way to the moon, the paradise of the dead, be opened for them. After their death, they are cremated in the same way as all other deceased persons, that is to say, in the case of old people only the head is burned, and their ashes, too, are preserved and drunk at the festival in memory of the dead.

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775 Greater than the fear of death among all Surára and Pakidái is the thought that they might one day die without being cremated, for example, during military actions, for then the entrance into the moon is barred for their soul (see p. 198).

766
[684] Persons who commit incest are excluded from cremation after their demise, and they are not mourned, for incest is re-
[784] garded as the greatest crime. Poré (see p. 197) does not want their souls on the moon, and partaking of their bone ashes would exert unfavorable influences on the male members of the tribe. They are therefore tied up in a squatting position and buried in a hole in the ground.

766
858
774 If children die before the completion of the third year of life, they are thrown into the river without any ceremony, since they belong to the flesh and blood of the mother and do not yet have their own soul (see p. 138).

/206 cont./

223 order to pick it up. As a result of his expertness in hunting, he knows the trees in which the birds gather to spend the night. The man, using palm leaves and bejucos, carefully prepares a blind with the sure hope that, by means of this ambush, the booty will be plentiful.

224 262 [237] [482] Hunting in groups is common among the Sanemá, and they do this particularly to surround a group of monkeys, peccaries, or in order to kill a feline. /207/ They do not eat the meat of jaguars, but keep the canine teeth in the roof of the house. They tie up the peccaries that they get, front feet to the back ones, load them on their backs, and carry them home. The meat of the peccary is greatly esteemed, and the whole rancheria gathers to eat the animal, with the exception of the young unmarried men, who, by order of the capitan, must not taste the meat so that the hunters who have killed the animals will not die. They may, however, eat other kinds of meat and the food which they most like.

There are some animals that the Sanemá are prohibited from hunting: thus, they do not eat snakes, they kill the cayman, but [766] do not sample its flesh. The Sanemá of the Erebato told us that they cremate caymans as they do men, for, in fact, as far as [784] they are concerned, caymans were previously men. It is taboo to kill a morrocoy or a turtle. They were people before and Omao 262 223 does not permit them to be killed. There are other animals which they kill and eat only under certain conditions, among them the eagle (21).

> 21. The Surará and Pakidai kill the eagle, but throw away its flesh. They say that it transmits sickness (Becher, 1960, p. 77). (Cf. the section on "death" in the present study /see pp. 93-94 /.)

223 125 262 If a hunter comes upon an eagle, he believes that he is facing a speciman of a species of animal which was previously a person. He may be facing a friend or an enemy. Therefore, before shooting, he asks the animal if it is a friend or an enemy, and only if

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

cannibalism. When someone dies in battle, or through some other violence—when he dies, that is, in the full prime of manhood—the body is cremated on a pyre and the ashes scrupulously gathered. Mixing these to a paste with water, they make a block which is wrapped in banana leaves and kept for the ceremony of the Drinking, by which they believe that the dead man's strength can enter their own bodies. Such ceremonies generally take place at large assemblies, people from neighbouring tribes also being present, and the festivities may last several days. Our Indians, however, wanting to assure a good augury for the voyage they were about to undertake with us, had limited themselves to a shortened version of the usual ceremony, since in these particular circumstances there was neither the time nor the opportunity for more.

II

In three little canoes, two of them the property of Frenario's people, we went down the Yevarehuri, making for the point where it is joined by a slightly smaller, darker stream flowing from the south—the Matahuri. It had been raining ceaselessly for days and the rivers were overflowing their banks, which made it difficult to find a camping-place for the night.

On the second day we had two fair-sized falls to negotiate. The third day's paddling brought us to the Marahuri, but we left it to the right of us, its mouth being apparently quite blocked by fallen trees, and entered a smaller stream just to the south of it, which offered quiet water and a clearly defined course between the giant vegetation of both banks. The Shirians told us that this new waterway was called the Toroli—that is, the Turtle—and that we had only to go up to the source to find the track crossing the cordillera which led to the north side of the Upper Parima river.

Our crew was hardly sufficient and progress was exasperatingly slow. Happily, there was plenty of game. Guans and curassow were plentiful, as well as monkeys and sloths—the Indians' favourite dish.

Our head man was a real lead-swinger. From the first day onwards he complained of a pain in his foot which made him draw the line at heavy work. Under the drenching rains that fell with every interminable afternoon, he would sit in the middle of the canoe, and also in the middle of the bananas we were carrying, holding a palm frond over his head. If we urged him to do

/~~443~~ cont./

Domestic Animals

231 Dogs are raised and generally used in hunting.

Birds of almost all types are captured when they are found before leaving the nest. Most of these only survive a few days. It seems that the parrots manage to survive in captivity much better than the other birds, so that almost all the settlements have a domesticated parrot. Turkeys and cranes are included among the other birds which can survive and reach the adult state.

Domesticated monkeys are also favorite animals. It is interesting to observe that almost without exception the monkey is the property of a woman. Doubtless this is related to the fact that women nurse the little monkeys until they are weaned. The mother monkey must be killed in order to be able to capture the little monkey.

Small rodents, such as squirrels and vesper mice, are brought to the house sometimes to be domesticated. One family even went so far as to raise a wild pig (chácharo).

231 /~~444~~/ When a domestic animal dies, it is incinerated out-
766 side the settlement, near some path. Its bones are left in the same spot where they were when the fire consumed them.

241

Agriculture

Platanos and banana trees occupy nearly 90 per cent of the cultivated lands. Other fruits include sweet yuca, bitter yuca, ocumo /malanga/, mapuey /yams/, sugar cane, maize the pijiguao palm /peach palm/, pepper, the papaya, and the sweet potato.

241 Tobacco, cotton, and onoto /annatto/ are the principal non-
824 edible products. Other nonedible products include a grass whose
302 stem is dried and used for cutting the hair; a variety of root
789 similar to the wild onion is used in magic for hunting, for ob-
302 taining a wife, etc.; especially fragrant leaves are used by the
276 women in their ears; and the ingredients used in the processing of "yopo," a narcotic which is blown into the nose.

/483 cont./

758 515 They bathe sick persons. If the patient cannot go to the stream, they bathe him part by part at home and even in his own hammock.

/484/ Death

763 They are generally afraid of death and make every effort to keep a dying person alive for a while longer. When someone is in danger of dying, the relatives and friends hold meetings for lamentations at least once a day.

764 [302] [535] When a dying person expires, a time of mourning begins. Then, at about 3:00 in the afternoon, the funeral begins. The relatives and friends begin to paint themselves. There is much crying and lamentation. The women dance forward and backward, groaning and carrying several poisoned darts in one hand. If there are young children, they are frequently carried also. If the deceased is a little one, its little body may be carried during the final part of this mourning dance. A few closely related men and the intimate friends also participate in the dance.

After the lamentations have continued for a quarter of an hour more or less, the men go out in search of firewood and light a fire of two meters in front of the dwelling where the corpse is lying. When the fire reaches an adequate size, the body is carried there in a hammock made of cords of vine and placed on the fire. Then they put more wood on top of the [766] corpse. If the deceased is an infant, they place it in the fire in a flat basket rather than a hammock. They keep the fire burning [765] until around ten at night. Then they gather up the bones, wrap them in leaves, and hang them in the house.

If someone should die far from the settlement, his body is wrapped in leaves tied with vines and carried to the settlement to be cremated.

765 About three days after the cremation, the bones are pulverized in a small trough and then kept hermetically in a gourd capped with beeswax. The trough is made by using a machete to carve out the hole, burning its interior. They use it only once. After it is used, both the trough and the pestle are burned. Much weeping accompanies the process of pulverization and sealing the remains in the gourd.

appropriately adjusted, he had no difficulty marrying the remaining two.

The close ties between siblings of the opposite sex and between brothers-in-law are also reflected in the fact that incestuous relationships are not severely punished. Thus, Kɑobäwä was known to be having an affair with his classificatory sister, Krämi, but her husband overlooked the matter. Incest is not severely punished. The Yɑnomamö rely on the internal sanctions of shame and conscience, bolstered supernaturally by the fear that incestuous affairs prevent the release of the soul of the guilty party during cremation. As a counter measure, they dismember the body of someone known to have committed incest during his life time, and burn the parts of the body a much longer time than they normally would have otherwise. Some of the Yɑnomamö avoid incestuous affairs, according to Kɑobawä, because one of their ancestors turned into a sloth (ihama) after having committed incest. Kɑobawä himself initially denied having incestuous affairs because incest (yawerɛmou), as he put it, ". . . is the most despicable thing possible." Later, he confided that he had fornicated with his FaBrDa on a number of occasions and did not seem particularly concerned about the matter, except his fear that I would tell his wife. Other data suggest that incest, far from being feared, is widely practiced. In particular, kinship usage varies considerably from the expected usage predictable from genealogical data and the Iroquois terminology. Whenever I

794 I, in effect, was capturing the *noreshi* of the child: A photograph was called *noreshi*.[13]
825 Tape recordings, in contrast, were not considered to be harmful. If anything, they enjoyed
177 having me record their music and discussions, and always demanded that I play them
123 back for everyone to hear. The word used to describe a recording was *no shaobibi*, the part
126 of the soul that wanders in the jungle after the body is cremated. In short, only the *noreshi* aspect of the soul is vulnerable.

766 TREATMENT OF THE DEAD If a person dies in an epidemic, his body, along with those of the others who died, is placed on a tree platform and allowed to decay. After
[809] several months, an old man is appointed to strip the remaining decayed flesh from the bones and the bones are then cremated. The Yanomamö fear the smoke that is produced
[763] when a body is cremated, and since epidemics are feared, they do not take a chance on
[783] contaminating the houses, implements, and persons with the smoke produced by the burning bodies.

764 Under normal circumstances, the body of the deceased is placed on a pyre of logs, covered with additional wood, and allowed to burn until nothing but the large bones
[783] are left. The burning takes place in the village, usually in the afternoon. The children and
[562] women leave, as they are susceptible to contamination by the smoke. They all bathe
[858] carefully to wash off any possible contamination. Even the weapons are washed.

After the coals are cool enough to handle, the relatives sift the ashes meticulously with shallow, loosely woven baskets, collecting every bit of bone they can find. The charcoal of the wood is burned, lest a small piece of bone be mixed in with it. The accumulated bones are then ground in a log mortar, hollowed out by means of alternate burning and chopping. These logs are about 4 feet long and 6 to 8 inches in diameter.
[237] For grinding the bones of a male, white buzzard down is usually attached around the
[531] circumference of the mortar, and curved lines painted on the mortar with red pigment.
[562] The mortars used for females are not decorated as elaborately, but usually have decorative fibers of a palm tree, the kind used by women to decorate their perforated ears. Circles and dots are painted on the mortars of females.

The charred bones of the dead are placed, a few at a time, into the mortar and a
[531] long, slender pole is used as the pestle. These poles are about 6 feet long, 2 or 3 inches in diameter, and bear painted decorations. The bones are crushed into a black powder by a young man, while the relatives of the deceased sit around the mortar and weep profusely. The ground ashes are then transferred to hollow gourds through a small hole and
[266] sealed with wax and buzzard down. A little is left in the mortar and eaten, mixed with boiled plantain soup, on the day of the ceremony. The mortar is always burned after a ceremony.

769 About a year later, the rest of the ashes are eaten during a feast, again mixed with
266 boiled plantain soup. Occasionally, they will deliberately save some of the ashes, especially ashes of those who were killed in raids, making use of them for a number of cere-
[726] monies. Before each attempt at getting revenge, the raiders eat the ashes of their slain kinsman. This puts them into the appropriate state of rage for the business of killing enemies.

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[13] Many informants gave a more pragmatic explanation of their fear of the camera. They did not want to be
[969] reminded of their dead kinsman, and if I had a photograph of this person, this would be an extremely offensive reminder to his relatives that their loved one was dead.